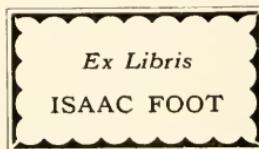




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FROM THE
DEN *of a* CAMBRIDGE DON

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FROM THE DEN
OF A
CAMBRIDGE DON

Miscellaneous Verses by

(L. A., pseud.)

Alston, Leonard

""



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PART I
CAMBRIDGE VIGNETTES
AND OTHER POEMS

A

MOONLIGHT

(Australia)

A JOLLY bed : five planks of deal,
 And one thick blanket (from the Store).
How through the chinks the breezes steal
 And stir the red leaves on my floor
Of earth ! while on my roof of bark
 The storm-drops beat a brisk tattoo
On winter evenings, through the dark ;
 Or, from the crevices, splash through. . . .

‘A hut !’ (you sneer) ‘a hovel bare !
 Upon the outskirts of the world
Of wealth and pow’r—a beggar’s lair !
 And in it a lank wastrel curl’d.’

Ah, but when through my snuggery’s patch’d crown
 (Wafting forth odours sweet o’ the wattle bark)
On nights serene the friendly Moon drops down
 Her nimble rays to adorn my chamber dark,
A castle, then, is mine, meet for a king.
 And—though to you it gapes a hovel still—
Dearer, to me, the moonbeams’ furnishing
 Than the proud turrets of your city’s skill.

C A M B R I D G E V I G N E T T E S

C A M B R I D G E V I G N E T T E S

I

A B O V E C H E R R Y H I N T O N C H A L K - P I T S

BILLOWS of wind.
Beneath my feet
An adventurous cottage that has clamber'd down-
stairs
To live by the lime-kiln.
Near the rainy horizon
A tow'r and a spire ;
And nearer
Are dust-whiten'd chimneys
Belching forth pulsating spirals of sulphurous
labour-born smoke.

II

J E S U S L O C K

A tiny island
Bright with familiar flow'rs ;
A baby Niagara (never tired) ;
The lock-keeper swinging his pole.

CAMBRIDGE VIGNETTES

A youth in a gown and a boy from the town
Striding jauntily over the narrow bridge ;
And the latest tune—of a girl and a moon—
One is whistling briskly—I cannot guess which.

III

‘ THE BACKS ’

A sea-shore of autumn leaves
Brown and damp ;
An angry swan ;
The musical note of a bell
Clanging—clanging.
A sunset of rose rippling round the sky ;
From over an ancient, stately pile
The note of a bell
Dreamily clanging—clanging—clanging.

IV

PARKER’S PIECE

A square of green baize
For riotous children to play on :
Children of three ;
Children of *sixty*-three !

CAMBRIDGE VIGNETTES

Let me vault the red rails
And scamper across it ;
For I
Feel about fourteen to-day.

v

‘VIA DEVANA’

Tramp !—tramp !—tramp !
Legions in armour, legions of old,
Steadily—sternly—marching north.

Tinkling of bells.
Legions of cyclists, legions of youth,
Swallow-swift and blithe.

The Roman Road
Arrow-straight
Undeviating
Marches north.
Tramp !—tramp !—tramp !

CAMBRIDGE VIGNETTES

VI

MADINGLEY ROAD

The road that waltzes, waltzes forth,
With skirts embroider'd with elms and oaks
In a hurry to reach the foot of the hill ;
Then slowly climbs,
To pause atop ;
And waves a hand to her brother
Who 's climbing the Gogs.
' *Bye-bye !*
I 'm off to Oxford !
Give my love to London Town !'

VII

BYRON'S POOL

A low wall of brick
As my seat,
Beneath far-reaching branches laden with red
leaves and gold.
A flash
Of living jewellery
Over the waters dark,
Where a kingfisher has made his home in the
clayey bank.

CAMBRIDGE VIGNETTES

On my left, Lingay Fen.
A watery avenue stretching away to the Mill. . . .
(It is rather good,
Sitting here.)

VIII

DESCENDING CASTLE HILL

A tunnel
Leading down to an ants' nest.
Under wreaths of cold fog
How they swarm at the portals,
And hustle each other about,
Bearing manna,
And honey,
For the young ones at home in their cells !

IX

TRUMPINGTON STREET

A serpentine swirl,
Now hiding a college,
Now showing a row of Greek pillars ;
Then, prosperous homes :

CAMBRIDGE VIGNETTES

Ever and ever
New vistas.
Then the trees !
A torrent of trees !
And the 'Pem' sparkles merrily by me.

X

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS

Clatter of feet in the Market Square.
Vigorous, sun-tann'd
Figures in grey—figures in grey,
And the bayonets flashing bright !
Are your water-flasks filled ?
Are your bandoliers right ?
(*Ready—aye, ready !*)
Clatter of hoofs along Market Street
And the mounted men trot past.
(*Steady—my geegees, steady !*)
Rumble of wheels down Trinity Street,
And the engineers roll by
With a loaded lorry.
Vigorous, sun-tann'd
O.T.C.

C A M B R I D G E V I G N E T T E S

XI

COE FEN IN WINTER

A Siberian waste ;
Ice ; snow ;
Desolation.
The river bursting its numb'd, glazing banks.
The bathing-sheds
Shivering in the wind.
Wind!
Let me button my coat
And stride out across it.

XII

A CAMBRIDGE FRIENDSHIP

Well, Horry,
We 've known one another a long time now.
Six centuries, is it ?
Or is it seven ?
Do you like me as well as you used to do,
Long, long ago ?
Let us take a punt round to ' Paradise,'
And smoke, and dream,
Under a creeper-cover'd, overhanging bough.
Right-*ho*, Jack ! Just *let's* !

CAMBRIDGE VIGNETTES

XIII

THE ORCHARD, GRANTCHESTER

Foam of bright blossom.

Tables—tables—

White cloths covering tables

As merry as the apple-trees.

The chirrup of birds :

Chirrup ! chirrup ! chirrup !

Broken-back'd

Deck-chairs

And veteran camp-stools.

Strawberry jam ! wasps ! bananas ! pots, pots of
tea !

Young men in flannels ; cigarette smoke ; straw
hats ; a Japanese sunshade.

A jubilant puppy in head-breaking gallop

After a sparrow.

Chirrup ! chirrup ! . . . yap ! yap ! yap !

A three-years-old mite

Cooing gleefully,

'Look, mother; just look !'

The maids

CAMBRIDGE VIGNETTES

Hurrying with loaded trays through the foot-
high grass.

Bees !

Strawberries and cream !

Let us drink

A Health to the Orchard—

In tea, in cream, in tobacco,

In silvery laughter that ripples.

XIV

THE BOOKSELLER'S SHOP

Chocolates ! gingerbread ! slices of plum-cake !

How I envy the boy

Who serves at the counter !

With permission to eat,

And eat, and eat,

Crunching candy and peppermints

All the year round !

Why, the walls are encrusted with toffee !

And the floors

Are all litter'd with lollipops

Done up in delicate packages !

What a feast for a gluttonous

Haroun-al-Raschid !

CAMBRIDGE VIGNETTES

(I shall gather a library
Of my own
By and by.)

XV

IN THE BOTANIC GARDEN

By the green sward
Belov'd of the daisies
A tiny isleted lake—
The ball-room
Of haughty drakes and homelier waterfowl
And feather'd visitants from distant climes—
Mirror and ball-room floor in one,
Bedeck'd with reeds and prairie grass
And white and yellow lilies.

XVI

THE FOUNTAIN, GREAT COURT, TRINITY

A pillar of musical crystal,
Chanting its chime ;
Chanting its chime ;
Chanting a chime
That keeps step with the march of the Ages.

C A M B R I D G E V I G N E T T E S

XVII

THE SENATE HOUSE

Grey, stern
Mother of masterful Mages !
We throng at the gates.
The silver-mace-bearers
Mount the stone steps ;
And behind them
A grey
Old man
Robed in imperial scarlet
Totters feebly.
Grey, stern
Mother of masters many,
We salute !

IN EXILE

IN EXILE

OH, you blue tarn (so deep !)
Set in the mountain's flank,
How you talk as your ripples leap
And lap, lap, lap at your bank !
Talk of the Northern Hills—
My hills—what are they to you,
You lake in the Ghats so blue?—
And the English woods, and the rills
That leap as my blood leaps now
As I hear you talk. How, how
Have you learn'd to tell,
Of that wooded upland dell,
What *I* had almost forgot?—You blue,
Blue lakelet set in the jungly flank
Of the Ghats. Let me stay and hear you and thank,
As you whisper, you deep blue tarn,
So wisely of brook and barn
And home! Let me listen to you,
Watch you and thank, hear you and thank—

IN EXILE

Lying here where your bosom is blue
On the jungle-shaded bank.
(You blue, blue tarn so deep,
Set in the mountain flank !)

Matheran, 1904.

THE HARBOUR LIGHT

THE HARBOUR LIGHT

I

[Love's greeting from the land]

O CRIMSON light, upon the foreland far,
 Coming and going
In revolutions steady ; lonely star
 Allegiance owing
To Man the mighty Maker, Lord of land and sea ;
 With radiance flashing over wave and scar,
 One moment showing
The black buoy tossing at the harbour bar,
 Now seaward throwing
The beckoning rays that call my Wanderer home to
 me ;
Flash him a rosy welcome o'er the deep,
 Thy glory flinging
Round yonder sluggish bows that landward creep
 Like misers bringing
Long-hoarded gold they fain would keep nor ever
 spend.

THE HARBOUR LIGHT

All other wealth they bring I hold but cheap
As sparks up-springing.
Tell him my love for him will never sleep,
But, closer clinging,
Will wake, and watch, and serve him, humble, to the
end.

II

[Love's greeting from the sea]

O crimson light, upon the foreland set,
The dark ways cleaving
With lanes of light and welcome ; stay and let
Thy beam deceiving
One moment longer light the balcony I know.
A moment since it seem'd my eyes had met,
O'er waters heaving,
Grey eyes, and hands that round me fling a net
Of wondrous weaving—
There may I captive stay till Death's tides round me
flow !
O crimson star, no beams of thine compare
With her eyes, blending
The glories of the kingly Day, and fair
Queen Night descending

THE HARBOUR LIGHT

With slow, majestic step adown the curving sphere.
Proclaim my swift home-coming, and declare
 My love unending,
My worship, and the service that will dare
 All things, contending
For her sweet sake with pain, and shame, and death,
 and fear.

Port Fairy, 1897.

A SONG—FOR FIVE—OR (MAYBE) SIX

A SONG—FOR FIVE—OR (MAYBE) SIX

I

WHAT should be my choice
If a powerful Sprite
Came with word of might
Bidding me rejoice—
Choose the single prize
That should please my eyes?

II

Should I be a Sword,
Slashing through a throng
Of evils and abuses pour'd
From every land through ages long—
A seeming-solid, yielding throng
Of toad-stool imps whose bones scarce blunt
My red edge through the battle's brunt?
Should I be a Sword?

A SONG—FOR FIVE—OR (MAYBE) SIX

III

Should I be a thunder-clap
Of music bursting through the blue
To wake the dreamer from his nap
And shout Hallo at you ?
Or should I be the lightning flash
Before the thunder's mighty crash
That rends the robe of night
With blade of yellow light—
A bold explorer, daring, rash,
Disclosing to its view
Ancient thoughts and true,
To the World's eye new ?

IV

Should I be a Tow'r
Set upon a crest
Of mountains stern that glow'r
Above a mighty cleft,
Like an eagle's nest,
Where Queen Truth, bereft
Of her old domain
In valley, hill, and plain,

A SONG—FOR FIVE—OR (MAYBE) SIX

Will her court still hold
Fearless, firm, and bold ?—
Flags to flap above,
Challenging all winds,
East or west or north or south,
Through the flood-time and the drouth,
While the sentry binds
Flowers about the staffs,
And the blue sky laughs ?
Should I be a Tow'r
To guard the throne of Truth ?

V

Good 'twould be, in sooth ;
But if such my pow'r
Better still I 'd choose,
And the prize not lose.

VI

Let me be a Song
For some few to sing
As they row along
And the crystals fling

A SONG—FOR FIVE—OR (MAYBE) SIX

From their merry oars,
Gliding up the course
Of the friendly Cam—
'Comrade, comrade, comrade'
Laughing back at me—
Or toward Babraham
Tramping two or three
Closely by me on the track
Warriors built ere turning back
To guard the walls of Rome:
'Comrade, comrade, comrade'—so!
Flinging jests as on we go,
Where from crests of grassy foam
Larks like tuneful bits of spume
Splash into the blissful sky,—
High and higher, higher, high!—
Trilling, trilling like some loom
Of Phœbus weaving garments bright
To clothe our hearts in robes of light.

VII

Or, when night is dark,
'Comrade, comrade'—hark!
Some one's at the gate—

A SONG—FOR FIVE—OR (MAYBE) SIX

‘Comrade, are you sitting there?
May I climb the winding stair?
Ten it is—not very late.
May I take your old arm-chair,
To chat and smoke some hours away?
Comrade, may I stay?’

VIII

I would be a Song
That some child would sing,
Some wee toddling thing
Who has learn'd to sing
‘Mister, Mister Comrade, please,
May I walk with you
Past the crowded school
Where there's big boys cru'l,
All the long street through?
Mister, Mister Comrade, please,
Won't you carry me?—so?
Till we come where candies grow
And of toys there are a lot?’
Then in whisper low—
‘Mister, Mister Comrade,
Have you choc'lates got?’

A SONG—FOR FIVE—OR (MAYBE) SIX

IX

I would be the Song
One old soul may croon—
‘ He will not be long ;
I expect him soon ’—
While the kettle sings
O'er the fire that flings
Flickering lights and shadows dark
Round the curtain'd room
(Mixing glow and gloom),
Where her needles mark
Patterns on the wool she holds,
While outside the silent room
A wintry tempest scolds.
I would be a Song
For her heart to croon
Through the evenings long
In the silent
Silent
Curtain'd room.

1914.

NABOTH, THE ASSISTANT SCHOOLMASTER

NABOTH, THE ASSISTANT SCHOOLMASTER

I WROUGHT with my spade
Preparing a Garden of Beauty—
A Retreat for the Autumn of Life,
With a hammock to dream in—
A Garden of Knowledge and Friendship.

A company promoter
Envied it,
Stole it.

F R E E D O M

FREEDOM

CURS'D land of Servitude, at last, at last
These eager feet leap from the hated shore.
The flag of freedom flutters from the mast
That shows the arm'd friend at the harbour door.

At last, at last I stand upon the deck.
The cannon boom. The hills swim slowly by—
Hills, streams, and woods, where at the tyrant's beck
I toil'd, 'mid comrade slaves, death ever nigh.

Their cry, as mine, was aye for Liberty ;
Their bitter tears, with mine, incessant fell ;
Our woes were common, theirs and mine, for we
Shared all alike in that accursed hell.

Now fare I forth, alone. My lips are free,
Though they I loved in chains, in slavedom,
dwell. . . .
Hills where I toil'd—with these—for these—and ye,
Dear woods, dear land I thought to hate—farewell!

1897.

‘PHILANTHROPY’

‘PHILANTHROPY’

Two generous gifts I bring :
The coin that clinks into his greasy palm
Where it can brightly tempt him (‘*Work no more ;*
A beggar’s life is simpler ; beg, not work !’) —
The kindly scorn that means — ‘a weakling framed
For lower, beastlier life than mine, and so
Worthy of unexacting charity. . . .’
I give — with thanks that I am not as some,
Hesitant and hard of heart — but love to give —
And turning, leave him crouch’d beside the path,
A little lower in the mire. . . . What then ? . . .
Am I my brother’s keeper ? *Are you mine ?*

1905.

A MOTHER AT THE FIRESIDE

A MOTHER AT THE FIRESIDE

To honour my lad, they say,
The kings and the captains combine,
And I tremble at home, and pray
That he come as he went, all mine.

Yes, praise him, praise, an ye will,
But so that ye send him to me
Unhurt by your praise, and still
Unchanged in his loyalty.

Yes, deck him with titles and stars,
So ye turn him not from his ways ;
For insult can leave no scars
Like the scars of unseemly praise.

And when he cometh again,
As *my son* will he welcom'd be,
So ye send him with never a stain
When ye send him again to me.

1898.

THE THREE MINSTRELS

THE THREE MINSTRELS

*'How quickly dies the memory of the dead
When others come,
And in the chambers of the heart their tread
Doth render dumb
The ghostly footfall of its earlier lord !
How quickly heals the wound from Sorrow's
sword !
How faints the echo of the jarring chord !'*

Thus sang the youngest, gay and light of heart,
With sure, deft fingers sweeping through the chords.
The vikings' favourite he, compact of joy,
And knowing not the burdens of the rest,
The elders, mothers, chieftains. Loudly rang
The revellers' applause. But Sigurd stepp'd
From out the gathering, seized the quivering harp
And woke new strains in answer, low and sad.

*'But let not die the memory of the friend
Who came and pass'd
Like crimson shafts the mounting sun doth send,
That faintly cast*

THE THREE MINSTRELS

*Their glories 'midst earth's shadows ere they fade :
My friend, for whom in life's bright dawn
there stayed
The beckoning Figure stern, whom none
evade.'*

The rough-voic'd revel check'd, and every eye
Turn'd towards one vacant seat—and Sigurd bent
And placed the royal harp in Geron's hand
(Whose eyes had darken'd in the lapse of years).
And Geron struck it strangely, waking notes
Unheard before in that wild banquet-hall.

*' Yet though the memory die, does not his soul
Inform us still,
Urging ev'n us to attain the star-bright goal
Through good and ill ?
Lives he not then in death more truly great
Than had he kept with us his earthly state
Who blindly see, through grief-dimm'd eyes,
his fate ? '*

And Sigurd took the harp, and with it set
A sheaf of lilies white and fresh, and laid
It in the vacant chair.

THE PRIZES OF LIFE

THE PRIZES OF LIFE

EMPEROR, artisan, prophet, page,
 One crown there is for each,
One royal glory for youth and age,
 One throne that all may reach—
The Kingdom of Love, with the name of Friend
From Life's first step to the Journey's End.

Fanatic, financier, pedant, sot,
 Strain ever for Dead Sea fruit,
Gathering weeds and thorns in our Garden-plot,
 Fit comrades each of the brute. . . .
To fling Life's diadem blindly aside,
And the garlanded victors *then* to deride !

1914.

FAR-AWAY HILLS

FAR-AWAY HILLS

FAR-AWAY hills in the distance dim,

Far away, yes, and near—

For near are ye to my heart and dear,

Linked for aye with the hope and fear,

Bound with the memories glad and grim

Of far-away distant days—

Far-away hills, where the mist clings white,

Where the soft clouds nestle and sleep,

Are ye full of a joy as broad and deep

As when I climbed, where your dark woods creep

From the gloomy vale to the sunlit height,

By the craggy, winding ways,

She at my side—in the love-lit years

Ere Grief bade the hours delay—

Are ye glad as ye were that autumn day?

For I dare not climb by the winding way

To walk where we walked. I am dull'd with fears:

For which were the worst of ills—

FAR-AWAY HILLS

Still to discover you glad as of old
When she climbed there at my side,
And to know that your woods had forgotten my bride,
Or to find you dark, and cry, ‘*Joy hath died!*
It is Grief now walks where her step was bold
On the far-away purple hills!’

1899.

MAY BLOSSOM

MAY BLOSSOM

BLOSSOM, blossom
White upon the tree-tops,
White along the hedge-row,
Blowing, blowing ;
Blossom, white blossom
Falling, falling
As falls the snow.

‘Blossom, blossom, blossom’
(The song of the bees !)
‘Blossom, blossom, blossom, blossom
Glory of the trees.’
Blossom, blossom, blossom of friendship,
Blossom of love—
Glory of a spring-time—
Glory of a life-time—
(Hark to the bees !)

The rough wind the white branch to the white
clouds is flinging,
Bidding the sky

M A Y B L O S S O M

Envy—

‘How distant your blossom,
White star from white star !’

Blossom, blossom, blossom of friendship,

Blossom of love—

Garland of a spring-time—

Garland of a life-time—

(Hark to the bees !)

1914.

GIVING AND TAKING

GIVING AND TAKING

WHAT to me—or thee—can matter these
Who closely count their gifts, and nicely calculate
How much received, how much repaid, and please
Their shrivell'd hearts as thus they prate
Of cancell'd debts—present for present, eye for eye,
Dinner for dinner—with complacent sigh
Reckoning the debit and the credit on the scrolls
Of wrinkled parchment that record their lives
For their own reading, till arrives
The Day of Final Reckoning and rolls
Away the well-thumb'd ledger on the shelf
That tells the tale of barter'd soul and self?

Comrade, let gifts to us be symbols only—
Symbols to tell the nearness of our souls
In that fated course we needs must run—
To whisper, 'Twin-soul, twin-soul, be no longer lonely,
Thou and I are welded into one.'

GIVING AND TAKING

Short-sighted selfishness that grieves to give,
Far-sighted selfishness that does not dare receive—
Are these for *us*? I would forget
Which of us two has giv'n or which received.
Goodwill was in the giving, yet
Nobler, methinks, the spirit that hath not grieved
To leave itself the debtor unto Love.

Twin-soul, twin-soul, let gifts be symbols only,
To say, 'No longer, twin-soul, be thou lonely.
'Love, love has come, fall'n from the heavens above.'

COMMEMORATION ODE

COMMEMORATION ODE IN A CONQUERED STATE

SING ! sing the song of triumph for the dead !
For who of triumph worthier than they
That left the plough, the desk, the chase, to meet
The stranger on the border hills, and greet
Him with stern welcome on his conquering way ?
Sing ! sing a song of glory for the dead !
For though that day the foemen's flag flew high
Above the tatter'd tents of those who fell
Low on the trampled field, all time shall tell
The triumph of the dead who ne'er can die.
Sing ! sing the song of Victory for the dead !

They marched with eyes alight and faces stern
To meet the alien on the hills afar,
And sadly, sadly shone that eve the star
That watched upon the hills their camp-fires
burn.

COMMEMORATION ODE

And Friend Death met them, wrapping them
from sight
In folds of glory, on the border hills,
And led them gently from the coming ills,
Friend Death who opes for men the realms of
light.

Sing, sing a peaceful requiem for the dead.
For peace is theirs who on the lone hills rest,
Not ours, who hear the strange lord in our halls,
Not ours, whose watch-tow'rs on our ocean walls
Crumble and fall, in clinging ivies drest.
Sing ! sing a pæan for the nobler dead !
And drink long life ! long life ! to those who fell.
For brief this life of ours, but theirs will last
When ours is portion of the misty past
To those who in our palaces will dwell.
Sing ! sing a deathless song to crown the dead !

1898.

FATE AND THE GARDEN

FATE AND THE GARDEN

I

STRANGE tricks of the fairy Fate !
Fate who caught my hand

And thrust me beyond the gate
That leads from the garden-land
To the land where cacti and sand
Cover all that the eye can see.

'Is there no way hence to flee ?'
I cry, and clutch at the gate
Shut fast by relentless Fate,
And strain, with foot and hand
And shoulder, to cheat my doom,
To regain the garden-land,
To return where the roses bloom.

Almost it opens. Free !—am I free ?
Nay, for two warders stern I see,
Set by a heartless Fate to wait
Grimly patient beside the gate.

FATE AND THE GARDEN

‘Shame and Dishonour welcome thee :
To pass with these Comrades thou art free.’

And I shrink aghast from the open gate,
And curse the craft of the fairy Fate.

II

Strange tricks of the fairy Fate !
Fate, who left to my hand

(Where I wailed by the gaping gate
Peering back to the garden-land)

Half-hid by the burning sand
The haft of a gardener’s spade.

‘And how will this steel thing aid?’

I cried. ‘Will it help me forget
The roses and fountains, or let

Me dig the grave of the Past
And bury it deep and fast?’

So I cried, from the flow’rs of the Past
By pitiless Fate out cast.

Frantic, to right and left I flung
The earth while the steel blade clash’d and rung.

Then Fate, for she saw the sweat
O’er my eyes that dripp’d and stung,

FATE AND THE GARDEN

Said, 'Let this toiler his yearning forget'
(And her eyes with the dew of pity were wet).

Now the roses blow both sides of the gate—
Gifts all of the merciful fairy Fate.

1900.

GOLDEN-HAIRED ALFRED THE GREAT

GOLDEN-HAIRED ALFRED THE GREAT

PLEASE, mother,
May I have that illumin'd missal?—
All for my own!

When you have learn'd
To read it,
Dear boy.

I 'll learn fast enough!
And when I 'm grown up,
May I take
All Knowledge
For my Province?

Yes, dear.

And conquer it?

Perhaps, dear.

And fight with the Danes?

Yes, dear.

GOLDEN-HAIRED ALFRED THE GREAT

And beat them?

Perhaps, dear. . . .

Now kiss me good-night,

My sweet boy.

Your brothers stay late this day

With the fyrd,

Drilling, and furbishing arms. . . .

(The Vikings ; the Vikings ;

My Æthelwulf ;

And my boys.

Oh, my heart ! my heart ! . . .

But an hour with the distaff

May ease, a little,

The pain of the long dark night.)

Eadgyth—my distaff !

And bid Werfrith bring faggots

To throw on the fire,

And strow fresh rushes

By the fire-side. . . .

(How stormy the night is !)

CULLODEN

CULLODEN

FROM Moidart Port, by the Devil's Stair,
 To bonny Edinbro' Town,
Is a journey light for men that dare
 To march with the Cameron down,
Slipping by Cope and the Volunteers
 And forcing the city gates
Ere the sleepy burghers have weighed their fears
 And measured their hopes and hates.

And hurrah for James the Eighth again !
 And hurrah for our bonny Charles !
For the Stuart line ! and the name that's lain
 Too long a butt for snarls
And jibes and Whiggish jeers and sneers—
 A name now crown'd with flow'rs
That will not fade in a score of years—
 A good Scots name that's ours !

From Prestonpans to Derby Peak
 Is a heavier tramp, I ween ;
But men must march when a crown they seek,
 And harder tramps I've seen.

CULLODEN

But where are the friends who once besought
The aid of our kilted ranks?
Are all of them dead, or has Hanover bought
Their souls and melted their thanks
Into coward shrugs and graceless words?
The friends of the ancient line?
Oh, their Jacobite gold and guns and swords
And the oaths dissolved in wine!

From Derby north is a weary way
To Glasgow and Falkirk field.
We've scatter'd Hawley's men in the fray,
But northward still we yield,
Foot by foot, and mile by mile,
The road to Cumberland's horde;
By open moor and crooked defile
The Butcher our flanks hath gored.

But we 'll gather again for a wild wolf leap
On the moor by Inverness;
And those who fall will soundly sleep,
And we others 'll never bless
The fate that robbed us of equal death
And a share in the praise they met,—
For the Hanover wind is a withering breath,
And the Stuart star hath set.

BY THE SNOWY RIVER

BY THE SNOWY RIVER

THE rushing river roareth by,
Shouting a brisk farewell.
Upon the shadow'd brink I lie
Held by the torrent's spell.
The willow boughs hang dripping down,
Veiling the shore and me.
(Only the lingering lizard brown
My hidden nook can see.)
And good 'twould be for ever thus—
Far from the workshops' din,
Far from the hot world's fret and fuss—
Perpetual peace to win ;
Beneath the tassell'd screen to lie
Held by the Snowy's spell,
To watch the waters swirling by,
And never say farewell !

PART II
SOME LIGHTER FREIGHT

D

A LETTER TO AN UNDERGRAD.

I AM bored with lectures and sick of reviews.
Can you wander round to-night,
And cheer up a bachelor don in the blues
With something a bit more light
Than the latest report of a dull debate
On the sad decay of Greek?
Come round when I 'm back from hall at eight—
I 've found it a weary week—
And I 'll sweep the blue-books out of the seat
Of the old arm-chair by the fire,
Where, cosily curl'd, or with ponderous feet
On the fender perch'd (or higher),
You can reach the cheery tobacco-jar
(Or, if your pipe 's not here,
The Virginians and the Egyptians are
In the little square box—quite near).
And if you 'll stay and my coffee sup
We shall crack a crusty joke,

A LETTER TO AN UNDERGRAD.

While I watch your laughter curling up
'Mid the grey tobacco smoke.*
We shall talk of old outings we took in May,
When we found a quiet spot
Where the water-fowl on the Granta play,
And stripp'd, when the sun shone hot,
For a dip, where the old North-Western leaps
From grass-grown bank to bank ;
Then gather'd again the Canáder's sweeps
To explore, where the reeds grow dank.
Or we 'll talk of tennis, and good teams met,
And how the struggle went ;
(For we 're ' flannell'd fools ' in the May Term yet,
If not ' muddied oafs ' in the Lent !)
We must fix up a tramp for to-morrow, too,
By the grassy Roman Road
That leads to the good George Inn that you
Think the best for a tea, when the load
Of the long term's work is off our backs
And the Easter Vac. draws nigh ;

* I supplied a beautiful diagram to illustrate that. LL^iL^ii (the inner spiral) was the laugh ; all the rest $SS^iS^{ii}S^{iii}S^{iv}$ was the smoke. But the publisher insists that this isn't a treatise on Economics, and he refuses to insert diagrams. (There wasn't room for the feet : so they couldn't have been printed, anyhow.)

A LETTER TO AN UNDERGRAD.

(In the spring-time, too, it's the best of tracks,
When the larks leap up in the sky !).
And when we have linger'd as long as we dare,
And the perilous hour of twelve 's
At hand, we 'll rout out your rags and square
For a flight—by our lawless selves—
Down the stair—past the landlady's watchful eye—
To the latch'd front door—ere the chime ;
For you 've barely the breath to shout good-bye,
If you 'd get to the Coll. in time !

HOW IT ALL LOOKS

HOW IT ALL LOOKS FROM THE LECTURER'S PLATFORM

[Written after reading Wordsworth's 'To the Daisy']

To my Audience

I

HERE, as I face you, ill at ease
Upon the dais—if you please—
I play with tropes and similes,

Like Wordsworth strumming on his harp.

[*Tink-a-link! tink-a-link! tink-a-link!*]

A troop of mice with hidden tails
You seem, and I a cat that fails
To squelch yon quivering mite that quails
At the claws of my questions, crooked and sharp.
[*Myiaow!*]

II

And, next, you are black and beaky rows
Of birds that 'ka-ah,' and twiddle your toes,

FROM THE LECTURER'S PLATFORM

And wait for the worms that my ploughshare shows,
As beside the furrow a moment I sit.

[*Geddup there, Dobbin! Geddup!*]

And then you are rows of cabbages—yes!—
Of lettuces green—and greener cress ;
And I am the boy, I must confess,

Who don't love weeding a little bit.

[N-no-o.]

III

‘ Ah, no!—a carpet’ (saith my Muse)

[*Oh, thanks awfully, don't you know! So good
of you to chip in like that when I'm
stuck!*]

‘ Of scarves and vests, and groups of Blues,
With socks of multifarious hues

Outrivalling all the flow'rs that blow
From Kubla's realm to Killimanzhoot ! ’

[*Oh, that's the idea, is it?*]

And I am just a horrid brute
To trample down with clumsy boot

Its variegated feelings so.

[*Good old Kidderminster! . . . Did it then? . . .
So s-sorry!*]

HOW IT ALL LOOKS

IV

And, next, a wandering minstrel I—
Antonio's brother. *How* I ply
That hurdy-gurdy's arm and try
 To charm away your fretful frown!
But you remain the stolid ring
Of staid spectators, while I bring
My ancient cap, for you to fling
 Your guineas in its batter'd crown.
 [M-yes !]

V

And now I view you from afar,
And like the Milky Way you are.
Tutors ask word of each white star—
 Will 't rise, or sink? And then I seem
A sage astrologer
 [Just look at my six-foot beard!] whose task,
Gravely his muddled thoughts to mask,
Is--answering swiftly as soon as they ask :
 'This is mere milk, and yon 's the cream !'
 [And some of it is not at all bad either.]

FROM THE LECTURER'S PLATFORM

VI

'Tis a harpsichord, with rows of keys
Both white and black, just made to please
A Mozart's hand. But doesn't it wheeze
 When I on the polished keyboard strum !
For my hair's not nearly long enough yet
To lasso the glow of a far sunset,
Or to fetch the thunder down in a net
 When the booming bass notes rumble and hum !
[*Presto ! fortissimo ! molta con disperazione !*
 Pedal PEDAL* PEDAL*.*]

VII

But it's never a wasp's or a hornet's nest,
To take offence at a dull don's jest,
But a hive of bees, that with tireless zest
 Doth bumble along with never a sting
While I point out the best of the honey-pots
'Mid the Pansies and the Forget-me-nots
That grow on the track that leads to the plots
 Where the wise Examiner-butterflies sing.
[*Chorus of wise Examiner-butterflies : 'Soft and lo-ow ! soft and lo-ow ! . . . while my little one, while my pretty one—sleeps !'*]

HOW IT ALL LOOKS

[*Chorus of Bees*: ‘*Bzz—bzzz—bzz—*(‘*Honey boys!*
honey!’). *Bzzzz—bzz—bzzz—*(‘*Here, here!*
honey!’). *Bzzzzzz—bzzz—bz. . . .*’]

VIII

Just *Undergrads.!* (I’ve hit it at last)
Who help the terms to travel fast,
By bustling our blundering planet past
 Each turn of its starry oval track
Of ninety thousand million miles,
With your football boots and your wanton wiles.
But—
 —Oft I wonder—in between-whiles—
How I look to *you* when I turn my back.
 [Hmmmh?]

POSTSCRIPT

[*Dated forty-seven years hence—when
I am old, and grey, and sour.*]

And now, an Examiner-moth myself,
I am bustling about on the well-stock’d shelf
Of a larder that’s loaded with glorious pelf.
 (And my armour of scarlet’s too rich for a queen!)

FROM THE LECTURER'S PLATFORM

The laboratory-larder doth shake and rock
With my laughter ; for I 'm preparing a shock
For the bees of an innocent keeper's flock.

The pickle-jar 's labell'd ' Sweet Nicotine ' ;
The sugar 's spread over with gauze of green ;
And the honey 's well hid in a soup-tureen !
And to-morrow I 'll blink on my perch, secure—
The Examiner's perch—looking *so* demure—
Talking Greek to a Proctor-wasp (for sure !)
And that perky young keeper will feel immature,
And go off to Germany's baths for a cure,
And the bees of his flock will be some fewer—

For they won't look for honey in a soup-tureen !

THE WAIL OF A LONELY EXAMINER

THE WAIL OF A LONELY EXAMINER

AFTER the usual exhilarating experience of correcting examination papers in the vacation, the poet found that he was expected to write a report on the candidates' work ; and for this purpose a blue official sheet with many printed directions was provided. Having a distaste for official documents, he chose instead a clean white sheet, and a smooth nib, and composed a lovely report in dithyrambic metre, with corybantic rhymes all over the place. The Secretary of the Examination Syndicate replied to this with a long, stern, frigid, expostulatory silence. Not expecting any retort quite so crushing as this, the poet took his banjo down from its hook, selected a few sheets of music paper, and wandered down to the beach (Hunstanton-on-Sea), where he composed

THE WAIL OF A LONELY EXAMINER

On a rock by the sea-shore a lanky tomtit
Singing ' Willow—tit-willow—tit-willow,'
With his talons all red from the brains of the boys
And the girls that you set him to kill (oh),

THE WAIL OF A LONELY EXAMINER

Alone by the wave, crumpled-feather'd, doth sit
Wailing 'Willow, oh willow, tit-willow.'
Can't he make just for *one* time a sweet tuneful noise
'Mid the roar of the rough ocean billow?
For he meets many sorrows and not many joys
Ere he lays his tir'd brain on the pillow.
What is it the Syndicate so much annoys
When he pipeth 'Tit-willow, tit-willow'?
Can't he cheer up, for once, yonder flound'ring por-
poise
Skidding—slumpety-bump—from a billow?
What's your porpoise in bidding him prosy-wise
poise
Nor show off his lyrical skill (oh !)?
With a nightingale's soul and a nightingale's voice
He trilleth his musical trill (oh),
When he hears his wing'd brethren tune up and
rejoice
On heather and meadow and hill (oh !).
Your blue-paper official his pleasure destroys,
And he's not in a hurry to fill (oh)
The dull printed snares that you sent as decoys
His fluttering pinions to still (oh !).
Can't you welcome for once his rich ballad so choice?
Nor ask for dull prose, much less mellow,

THE WAIL OF A LONELY EXAMINER

And *much* less *melOdious*—
Plain prose is odious
Set by the side of his ‘ Willow,
Tit-willow, tit-willow, tit-willow,
Oh willow, tit-willow, tit-williillliill—’*

* Sorry for that hole in the music sheet. The poet's voice broke.

A FEW OF THE MUSES

A FEW OF THE MUSES

I

EUCLID : ELEMENTS OF GEOMETRY

[*A Review for the Ath*n**m*]

WHAT a fellow is this—who declares
That lines have no thickness or width !
I couldn't catch *fish* with such snares.
Just watch when a tram-car skidd'th ;
Or see Jane, when my socks she brings
To our little back-yard, with the pegs
In her mouth, or the sparrow that sings,
Firmly perch'd, 'twixt my pyjams' legs.
Hasn't he eyes ?

And parallel lines never meet !
How do telegrams get to their goal—
Dodging telegraph-poles down the street—
If the wires never meet with the soul
Of some sweet telegraphiste girl
That would set *your* soft heart in a whirl—
Like the one who makes eyes o'er the bar

A FEW OF THE MUSES

At the Postage Stamp spot? . . . Was it wise
For the Pitt Press to trumpet afar
Such ridiculous phantasies? Eh?
Was it wise?

The pictures are queer too—like bits
Of spider-webs torn, or the play
Of the whiskers of Pussy who sits
On that hob. And the style! *Oh! the style!* . . .
Here are twenty-three 'lets' on one page! . . .
What queer sort of tennis! I'd smile
At a server who took such an age
To land a ball square in the court.
And 'therefore,' and 'therefore,' and 'therefore'! . . .
Did you publish that book just for sport,
Mr. Pitt? or wherefore? or wherefore?

II

'PALEY'

[An Epigram]

A bloodless 'ghost'
That, for a little, haunts our halls,
And, in a Little, Goes
With Abelard and Euclid to a grave
With not a wreath to show that we regret.

GREEK PROSE

III

GREEK PROSE

[*A Poem!*]

When you 're making a dish for a Classical Don
Keep the cruet well stock'd near your eyes,
With a canister full, to sprinkle upon
Your dough (if it fails to rise)
Those peppery particles *de* and *ge*
And *g'oun* and *men* and *oun*.
For they are the things that win a degree
And a master's long-sleeved gown !
And put in some spices, like *ei de me*,
Or some mustard, like *allos te kai* ;
And he 'll smile, and mark it with 'alpha' (sec !),
And ask you to tea by and by.
And don't forget the Datives that grow
On that palm-tree by *peithomai*,
Or it won't taste nice ; and be sure that you know
All the numerals right up to *pi*,
For they 're needed in classical pies, as a Don
Will explain as you 're slicing the tripe
For the Tripos feast, where no 'anak'louthon '
Must be left, when your dish-clouts swipe

A FEW OF THE MUSES

The last little speck from the pan of Pan,
And you make sweet melody
Piping loud with Theognis the song of *an* *
And the Genitive Absolute—see?

IV

GERMAN

[*A Conundrum*]

The alphabet-maker who turned out this type
Was in league with the fellows who rake in the coin
By selling the spectacles tir'd readers wipe
When they're puzzling a separable prefix to join
To a verb lying derelict 'way back behind,
Like a guard's van the engine must run back to find
When the coupling's forgotten. Alas! and alack!
I once swore I'd do it. I scrawled on a tape
All the words of one sentence (there sure were a stack)
And dragged it to Fenner's. The crowd stood agape
When I spread out the coils to consider it wisely,
Like a graph on the grass. But, to put it concisely,
After tripping six sprinters I gave the job best,
And from studying German I'm taking a rest.

* The proof-reader wanted to spell that with two n's and a capital A!

MUSIC

I conclude with this riddle. To solve it, who's able?
Why did Providence plan, when we scatter'd from
Babel,
To confer such a mort of good notions on folk
Who expound them like *this*? 'T seems a mean
sort of joke.

v

MUSIC

[An Episode at a Smoking Concert]

I came from far to feel the Master's power,
But fell into the Bore's. Oh, wretched hour!
Could e'en the Master generous passions wake
In one who suffer'd while the Bore thus spake?—

*Allegretto ma
non troppo.*

‘Watch the fingers lightly dance
O'er the polish'd keys, and mark
How the sparkling notes advance
Through the Scherzo blithesome.

ppp.

Hark! . . .

Andante espressivo ‘How softly now it dies away and
e sostenuto. greets

The stately Largo, that serenely
treats

A FEW OF THE MUSES

Of abbeys vast and dim, and palaced
streets,
And princely porticoes.

‘Now like a silver stream the melody
Goes rippling, rippling, rippling,
dreamily,
Without or change or pause un-
ceasingly,
And softly, smoothly flows

Allegro furioso. ff. ‘Till it joins in the frolic and laughter
and glee
Of the sun-brighten’d waves of the
broad-bosom’d sea
Of the Movement that carries us on
to the goal—
‘Tis the maddest mad Presto the
keys can unroll !

*Lento, con molta es-
pressione. mf.* ‘Now the closing chords are come,
Rend’ring all our praises dumb. . . .
Insinuendo, molto Say, ere yet the echoes die—
con dig-in-the-ribs. Perfect, sure—can you or I
Sempre espressivo. (We who have no skill to bring
Harmonies from key or string)

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Make *Life's* concords thus agree,
Make of *Life* a symphony? . . . '

* * * *

Then Silence came (with healing wing)

And waiters (with the coffee);
The Bore himself rose up to sing;

I fled—but I have not yet recovered sufficiently to
be able to discover any really suitable rhyme to
'coffee.'

VI

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[*Some Unofficial Minutes*]

I

Just see me take the President's chair,
And call for 'the Minutes,' and light my pipe,
While the Secretary reads, and the Freshmen stare.
For we're off to gather the apples ripe
That grow in Hesperides' Gardens—yes!
We shall tramp from Homer's glorious times
Through the Ages Dark, playing draughts and chess
With kings and popes, till we hear the chimes

A FEW OF THE MUSES

Ringing in the Golden Days to be,
Ringing out the old, ringing in the new,
Ringing out the false, ringing in the true—
And a longish tramp to face have we.

2

The first lot's fallen on Z to read,
And it's ' Boot, Saddle, to Horse and Away ! '
To Chalgrove Field upon Hampden's steed,
Then off to kill Papists down Drogheda way !
We shall chop off the head of a faithless king,
And do for old ' Thorough ' and saintly Laud,
And ' that Bauble ' out in the gutter we 'll fling !
(So Z 's had his say. Let us stamp and applaud.)

3

Next week we are ordering monarchs about
From a Papal Chair with the words of Fate ;
And Emperor Henry is quite put out
As he squats in the snow at Canossa's gate.
(Oh, the popes they are just capital things
For a game of ducks and drakes on our way
To the land where the Tripos Examiner flings
His queries about in his jovial play !)

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

4

Next Y has a glorious lot to say
Of the Manor that grew by the Saxon Seas,
And Maitland and Ashley he 's sure to slay,
And massacre Village Communities
With a blithesome smile. But as for me,
I am scornful of palæolithic folk,
Now Lloydy 's about with his statutes free,
Replacing the white along with the yolk,—
For though Humpty Dumpty *has* tumbled down
And all the King's Horses and all the King's Men
Swear he 'll never achieve it, he pledges his crown
That the village will flourish as fair as then.

5

And now it 's *my* turn to join the debate.
See the reverent juniors sit up and wait !
'I chatter, chatter' as fast as I dare ;
O'er 'sandy shallows' I splash and run ;
(And 'the golden gravel' beneath, I swear,
Won't pan out a golden grain to the ton !)
For students may blunder, but dons must bluff,
And I fancy to-night I have spoken enough,
(But I muse on that boy with the hatchet free
Who chopp'd down his parents' Cherry Tree).

A FEW OF THE MUSES

6

And now for a tramp upon Roman feet
From the far Seven Hills to the Northern
Wall ;
Rolling Caradog up in a parcel neat ;
Telling fishermen's fables of slaughter tall,
Before we have wiped the Iceni out
And planted Agricola firmly there
For that Tacitus chap to tell yarns about.
(Oh, the story of Rome is a story fair !)

7

Next, knightly King Stephen's time has come
For a bout with Matilda. Away she flies
Through the snow ; and the barons are making
things hum
With the noise of their feasts and their victims'
cries.
And Stephen reminds us of dear Mossoo
Who tried to teach French in the old, old school,
When we litter'd his desk with a frog or two—
He was not a bad chap, though we thought him a
fool.

72

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

8

And now let us hear about Good Queen Bess,
Of Raleigh, and Drake, and the buccaneers
Who brought back the spoil no pope will bless.

‘ But it’s rather thin,’ so the Secret’ry fears,
As he raises his critical glasses prim,
And quotes from ‘ Authorities’—buried—and dead.
And the ‘ Reader’ tries to get back at him
With a scoff that hurtles just over my head.

9

Then some one raises a point of law
And refers to the rules written plain and fair.
But what does it matter if there’s a wee flaw
In my ruling for once, as I swing in my Chair?
So I ‘ clash the glass to my sightless eye,’
Saying, ‘ Dash’d if I see it, by St. Elsinore !
Rule xxvi was repealed in July,
And I think that the “ Reader” may speak once
more.’
For members but stammer when chairmen bluff,
And I fancy to-night I have done enough,
Like Washington (George) who pilfered the axe
With which at that Cherry Tree he hacks.

A FEW OF THE MUSES

IO

And what's the next Junior's paper about?
Oh ! consuls and lictors and ephors and such.
Would you turn the old *polis* inside out,
With J*rd*n's notes to serve as a crutch ?
There's a lot in Warde Fowler's book, but then
We're sick of that Ancient City State.
Let's go for a trip with Lamachus' men
To conquer the island of Sicily—great !
And we'll die in a quarry near Syracuse
As dauntless Athenians ought to do.
(They wail by the walls, as they wait for the news,
Our wives—is the Conqueror's fleet in view?)

II

Now we're off once more on an ocean trip
With Christopher brave and his mutinous men,
To bring the gold goblets for Spain to sip.
Or we'll crawl up a peak of Darien,
And peer through a telescope farther west,
To spy on a war about Opium
In Palmerston's reign. And I'll be blest
If we brag about *that* in Kingdom-Come !

INTERNATIONAL LAW

12

And now at last the Session is done ;
And I fall on the Heights of Abraham,
While a comrade whispers, '*They run ! they run !*'
And I hear the street-door cheerily slam.
And I feel like Billy Atkins true,
When he won that skirmish at Waterloo.

VII

INTERNATIONAL LAW

[*A Cantata*]

A prelude in Latin—
 Jus Naturae
(Low chords in the bass) ;
 Jus Gentium
(A sprinkling of notes
 Staccato
All over the keyboard).

Medieval Heralds.
Some Papal Bulls.
(Low rumbling
Of sacerdotal thunder.
Sounds as of silver trumpets

A FEW OF THE MUSES

And the clash of steel on steel.)
Figures of youthful knights
Riding off on a Quest
For the Holy Grail.

Grotius,
And a *mare clausum*
Open at last !
(Jubilant notes on the clarion.
Drums ! drums ! drums !)

An Arm'd Neutrality,
Crumpling up
'Mid the roar of guns
In a Baltic fight.

The rush of a greyhound—
Alabama—
Through storms of sleety seas !
The *Kearsage* in stern pursuit.
And a *Biglow Ballad* for chorus, boys ! *

* *The Biglow Papers*, by J. Russell Lowell, U.S.A. ambassador to the United Kingdom. During the American Civil War, when a Northern cruiser (1862) took the Confederate envoys from a British steamer bound from Jamaica to England, Palmerston rushed regiments across to Canada ; the Prince Consort, standing behind

INTERNATIONAL LAW

*'We own the ocean, tu, John :
You mus'n't take it hard,
Ef we can't think with you, John,
It's jest your own back-yard.
Ole Uncle S, sez he, I guess,
Ef thet's his claim, sez he,
The fencin' stuff'll cost enough
To bust up friend J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me !
(Ez wal ez you an' me !)
The fencin' stuff'll cost enough
To bust up friend J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me !'*

Khaki contingents,
Landing at Beira,
Crossing a Neutral Zone
On the wings of steam,
Then hurrying southward
To the rescue of Mafeking.
(Tinkling of triangles !
Chiming of bells !)

Queen Victoria's chair, by his determination in toning down the angry despatches, was just able to prevent a fratricidal war. 'Uncle Sam' handed back 'the critters' to John Bull, 'cos Abr'am [Lincoln] thought it right.'

A FEW OF THE MUSES

A cruiser,
Flying the Russian Volunteer flag,
Pilfering British mails in Arabian Seas ;
And a P. & O. liner creeping home
With a prize-crew of Scythians aboard.
Roshdestvensky :
The wail of widows
Of North Sea fishermen.
(Violins—violins—
The Dead March from Saul.)

A slowly falling curtain
Showing
A shimmering vision of a palace at The Hague,
White stars in a dome of blue.

VIII

MEDICINE : ANOTHER ‘HAPPY THOUGHT’

[*With Apologies to R. L. S.*]

‘The world is so full of a number of things’
(Like toothache and cancer and perityphlitis,

MEDICINE: ANOTHER 'HAPPY THOUGHT'

Sprained ankles, catarrh, and the dance of St.
Vitus)

'I am sure we should all be as happy as kings.'

And always we 're digging up new things to name
With Anglo-Greek hybrids (to suit with the game),
Or with mongrel dog-Latin — it doesn't much
matter—

They 'll all make the patients their guineas to
scatter.

Oh, the world is so full of a number of things,

I am sure we shall all be as wealthy as kings.

‘COMING UP’

‘COMING UP’

[The First Day of Term]

CABS ! cabs ! cabs !
Porters and trucks ! What an awful mix !
Taxis and hansomis,
Bats, racquets, hockey-sticks !
An old dame dabs
A gingham in my eye
As I dole out my ransoms
Of tuppences, tuppences. ‘Hi !
That’s my Gladstone.’ And off we fly
Down Station Street, Regent Street. Isn’t it great
To see stout Robert with his hand of fate
Directing the torrent of traffic that pours
Round Downing Street corner ? There’s Tom, on
his bike
Petrol-driven, of by-laws a scorner,
A scorcher, a scorcher ! who bores
His way through the mob in a way that must strike

‘COMING UP’

Mere pedestrians as—er—reckless. Cheer-ho !
cheer-ho !

See you half an hour hence, Jack, at hall, and we ’ll
go

For a jaunt, when I ’ve found the old friend
That I left in the pipe-rack last term at the end
Of that rotten exam. Don’t ask for results. No,
please don’t !

The ‘Reporter’ tells tales. But *I* won’t.

Let me hunt out that cap with the cardboard all gone,
And we ’ll keep T.P. from seven, till late
In the long hours towards twelve.

A pipe with a gown mixes well, my son. . . .

Oh, the Tutor? Let’s shelve

That interview. Tutors can wait. . . .

A fig for your proctors!—Who said ‘six and eight’?

‘GOING DOWN’

‘GOING DOWN’

[*Some Light Blue Motor-Car Maxims*]

‘Hitch your waggon to a star.’

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

‘A STAR will tow it best,’ quoth Emerson. . . .

But what a length of rope ! It’s *bound* to bust ! . . .

‘Then hitch it, sonny, somewhere round the Sun,

And on the sunny Solar System pin your trust.

‘Just one word more—or two—before you start.

See that you get them—every one—by heart !

Life’s just like motoring—believe me, son.

They steer the surest who the swiftest run.

A brave Ideal is worth quite 10 h.p.—

That’s a straight tip that you can take from me.

And those whose Goal is Somewhere Far Away

Will sure get *somewhere*—*some time* in the day.

Good cars don’t prance about, and brag, and puff,

But smooth and silent go, though roads *are* rough.

Well, good-bye, lad. Watch well your steering-gear.

You’ll sure get *somewhere*, starting out from HERE.

And if, ere night, you strike an ugly ridge,

Just grit your teeth and growl out “Granta-bridge!”’

A REPLY TO AN EPIGRAM

A REPLY TO AN EPIGRAM

‘A young Apollo, golden-haired,
Stands dreaming on the verge of strife,
Magnificently unprepared
For the long littleness of life.’

FRANCES CORNFORD.

MADAM, though grateful for the timely note
Of friendly warning that above I quote,
We are not all perhaps quite ‘unprepared
For Life’s long littleness’ ; but some have learn’d,
In our great school, of fighters who have dared
Shame and dishonour ; at the stake were burn’d ;
Or in Life’s sterner work have bravely shared.
’Tis not our way to chatter loud of such,
As hockey-sticks we swing, or gaily dash
Pursuing footballs down the field. ’Tis much
The same (we fancy) where Professors flash
The port around in Combination Rooms.
Do they at ‘coffee’ ply their Logic looms ?
Or babble Sanskrit, Don with Don, at tea ?
Or figures carve in cakes—‘Let this be D,
And yonder Sheffield blade the base line be’ ?

A REPLY TO AN EPIGRAM

We felt the charm of your neat lines, and smiled
Without resentment. We're not easily riled.
Nay, rather, we applaud your warning note,
Which many now have safely got by rote.
But, for our answer—madam, no offence !
For Gareth's shield 's still blank—*ask, ten years hence!*

A LETTER TO MY LANDLADY

A LETTER TO MY LANDLADY

[Concerning an Aberdeenshire pup who belongs downstairs]

Who is it dashes up the stair
Without the very faintest care
For Mrs. S——'s carpets fair,
And at my door to scratch doth dare?

I answer—‘Jock.’

Who is it, if the door’s not shut,
Six capers round the room doth cut,
And seeks his eager soul to glut
With flies that down the curtains strut?

Why, surely—Jock.

Who is it votes my fire-place ‘fine,’
And on my hearthrug doth recline,
Nor rough caresses doth decline
(Or anything besides that’s mine)?

None else but—Jock.

A LETTER TO MY LANDLADY

Who is it that will ne'er respect
The privacy of that room bedeck'd
With bed, and mirrors that reflect
My visage ; but must *all* inspect ?

I still reply—‘Just Jock.’

What is it makes him come so merrily up the stair,
And somersaults fantastic turn around my chair
With thumping tail and eager eyes and mouth and
ruffled hair?

The answer *this time* needs a longer sort of line. I
swear the answer *this time* isn't any simple word
of one syllable, but something much more like
‘Coronation Biscuits—6d. a lb.—in the tin in
the cupboard, alongside the examination papers.’

TOMBSTONES

TOMBSTONES

[A New Elegy in a Country Churchyard]

LIKE white-garb'd fieldsmen, in the acre green
Beside the church walls spread,
As wicket-keepers, by each mound you lean
Against the railings red ;
Or play at cover-point ; or seem to scout
From other posts of vantage round about.

But, when I nearer stroll, to scan th' engraver's art,
I see you claim to play a more pretentious part—
Umpires, that rule '*This batsman's never out !*'—
Scorers, whose long statistics raise—well—just a
doubt !—

Reporters, whose audacity
Suggests—well—not *veracity*.

I turn ; the vision 's gone :
Life's game goes on.

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